

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, GR, US, TU

SUBJECT: REACTION TO THE LONDON MEETINGS

REF: ATHENS 4404

1. ALTHOUGH THE RADIO AND TV NEWS PROGRAMS HAVE SHIFTED THEIR COVERAGE FROM LONDON TO PARIS WHERE PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS IS MEETING THE FRENCH PRESIDENT ON A "PRIVATE" VISIT, THE ATHENS NEWSPAPERS TODAY (MAY 12) ARE STILL GIVING PROMINENT TREATMENT TO CARAMANLIS' MEETINGS IN LONDON. THE GENERAL SLANT OF THE PRESS IS SLIGHTLY MORE POSITIVE THAN IT WAS YESTERDAY (REFTEL) IN ITS TREATMENT OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S STAND IN LONDON ON AID TO TURKEY.

2. MOST PAPERS REPORT TODAY (OBVIOUSLY BASED ON A HIGH-LEVEL GOG BACKGROUND BRIEFING) THAT CARAMANLIS HAD TWO
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PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES IN GOING TO LONDON: (A) TO REINFORCE THE CASE FOR GREEK ENTRY INTO THE EC (BY SEPARATING GREECE'S APPLICATION FROM THAT OF PORTUGAL AND SPAIN, AND SPEEDING UP THE NEGOTIATIONS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE) AND (B) TO PRESENT THE GREEK POSITION ON CYPRUS AND GREEK-TURKISH ISSUES TO WESTERN LEADERS AND ESPECIALLY PRESIDENT CARTER. THERE WAS A GENERAL

CONSENSUS THAT CARAMANLIS HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN ACHIEVING THESE OBJECTIVES.

3. THERE WERE A FEW REFERENCES TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S DECOUPLING ARMS AID TO TURKEY FROM CYPRUS. PRO-GOVERNMENT, INDEPENDENT KATHIMERINI CARRIED A LONDON STORY HEADLINED "JIMMY CARTER'S NEW TACTIC-- AID TO TURKEY WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY STRONG PRESSURES FOR CONCESSIONS." THE ARTICLE CLAIMED THAT ALL THOSE CONCERNED WITH A SOLUTION TO GREEK-TURKISH DIFFERENCES HAD BEEN ASSURED THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO ACCOMPANY ITS LIMITED LIFTING OF THE ARMS EMBARGO WITH PRESSURE ON TURKEY. MILITARY MATERIEL OR CREDITS WOULD BE GIVEN TO TURKEY ON THE BASIS OF INDICATIONS OF MODERATION ON THE PART OF ANKARA ON THE CYPRUS QUESTION AND THE GREEK-TURKISH DISPUTE. IT WAS CERTAIN, THE ARTICLE CONTINUED, THAT THIS PRESSURE WAS ALREADY BEING APPLIED IN LONDON AND NOT ONLY BILATERALLY BY THE US.

4. SEVERAL JOURNALISTS CLAIM THEY HEARD THAT PRESSURES WERE BROUGHT TO BEAR ON DEMIREL IN LONDON BY VARIOUS NATO LEADERS TO MAKE CONCESSIONS ON CYPRUS AND GREEK-TURKISH ISSUES. SOME ALLEGE THAT EVEN QUEEN ELIZABETH HAD JOINED IN THE EFFORT AND URGED DEMIREL, AT HER STATE DINNER ON TUESDAY, TO ACT WITH MODERATION IN RESOLVING PROBLEMS WITH GREECE.

5. ALL NEWSPAPERS REPORT ON THE CALLAGHAN-DEMIREL MEETING AND NOTE ESPECIALLY THAT THEY AGREED THERE CAN BE NO PROGRESS ON CYPRUS UNTIL AFTER THE TURKISH ELECTIONS. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE CORRESPONDENT OF PRO-GOVERNMENT APOYVEVMATINI REPORTS FROM LONDON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT HE WAS TOLD BY A WELL-INFORMED DIPLOMATIC SOURCE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD ASKED CALLAGHAN TO BECOME THE MEDIATOR ON CYPRUS "AND NOT LEAVE THE CYPRUS PROBLEM TO THE CONCERN AND INTEREST OF THE U.S."

6. PREDICATBLY, COMMUNIST (KKE-INTERIOR) AVGHI'S STORY EMPHASIZES THAT THE DANGER TO GREEK NATIONAL INTERESTS AS A RESULT OF LONDON IS GREATER THAN EVER AND ACCUSES THE GOG OF ATTEMPTING TO COVER THE ACTS OF ITS NATO ALLIES. FOR ITS PART COMMUNIST (KKEAEXTERIOR) RIZOSPASTIS SAYS ATTEMPTS ARE BEING MADE AS A RESULT OF THE MEETINGS IN LONDON TO SPEED UP GREECE'S RETURN TO NATO.

7. MOST DAILIES INDICATE THAT CARAMANLIS WILL PROBABLY BRIEF OPPOSITION LEADERS, AND IN DUE COURSE THE PARLIAMENT, ON THE LONDON DEVELOPMENTS. DRAWING ON THE RECENT ISSUE OF TIME MAGAZINE, SEVERAL REPORTS COMMENT THAT THE US FEARS A CONFLICT THIS SUMMER BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY. OPPOSITION TO VIMA'S EFSTATHIADES, IN A STORY

DATELINED NEW YORK, CITES IN PARTICULAR ITEMS IN
THE AMERICAN PRESS WHICH DEAL WITH WASHINGTON'S SUPPOSED
CONCERN AT THE COURSE OF GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS. THERE IS
ALSO MENTION OF TURKISH PRESS COVERAGE CRITICAL OF WHAT
WAS SAID TO BE DEMIREL'S LACK OF SUCCESS IN LONDON IN
DEFENDING THE TURKISH POSITION.
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